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The President's Letter

By

Robert P. Woltz, Jr.

President,

Texas Society of Architects



I hope that even prior to reading my letter of this month you had the opportunity to at least glance through this issue of "Texas Architect." If so, I believe you will agree with me that your Texas Society of Architects is awake and alert. It could not be otherwise, and have such an unsolicited expression from Governor Daniels, as is given in one of the following articles.

All Americans employ one of our basic rights: the right to criticize our government—local, state and national. Although nearly everyone seems to have definite ideas on how all of our governmental problems should be solved, we are all too prone to express these ideas only over coffee cups to a few intimate friends. Too often, we are strangely reluctant to pass these ideas—many of which are good and which would be extremely helpful—along to our elected governmental officials.

In my letter of the February issue, I hinted to the fact that the Capital Area Plan Development for the state of Texas was going forward. Quite a number of the members of the Texas Society of Architects have given generously of their time, talent and money towards this expression of solving one of our governmental problems. From this work, I have found that the architects of Texas, and especially the members of the Texas Society of Architects, stand ready to participate in any function which concerns the beauty, and the architecture of the state of Texas. I only wish that every member could feel the full significance, and experience which a few of us have had. We are all quite proud of this job, and would like for Governor Daniels, as well as the rest of the Building Commission, to know that the architects stand ready to answer his call.

All of us realized that this has long been a controversial subject, but it offered such a remarkable opportunity for public service on a matter that will be of lasting importance to the people of Texas, that we do not feel we could pass this opportunity. It is axiomatic that no political or governmental project can please everyone. The facts that were brought out, the ideas and plans that have been suggested may not please everyone, but we do feel that a profession such as ours, as well as individual citizens, have a deep responsibility to participate in these governmental affairs.

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Harold E. Calhoun..... Editor
John G. Flowers, Jr., Managing Editor
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Texas Architectural Foundation

A dignified and thoughtful way to remember a departed friend is to make a donation to the memorial funds of the Texas Architectural Foundation. Chapters, firms and individuals increasingly are taking advantage of this method of demonstrating high regard through a constructive and meaningful expression.

All donations are acknowledged by the officers of the Foundation to the donor and the family or associates of the person memorialized. The application of the gift to further architectural education in Texas is explained.

Next time, send a check to:
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they see the . . .

VISION OF 1980

BY MARJ WIGHTMAN

A POLITICAL leader bends his ear hard against the ground . . . Will they buy it?

An architect sharpens his vision on plans for 1980 . . . Will they like it?

A budget expert stacks his estimates of outgo alongside his income totals . . . Can they pay for it?

Tomorrow is taking shape on Capitol Hill.

It's a touchable shape built of cork, plaster, wood and cardboard on two tabletop models of those Austin areas that now—or later—belong to all of Texas.

It's a nebulous shape of land still to be bought, offices to be built, traffic to be routed and trees to be planted.

The Shape of Tomorrow is the updated and detailed 1956 Capitol Area Master Plan. It took on a new dimension—practical politics—when the House Appropriations and Senate finance committee members got their first look at Capitol Hill stretched to scale on a tabletop.

The two groups—which include Budget Board members from both houses—met with the Building Commission and its Architectural Advisory Committee at the University of Texas School of Architecture. They took a close look at:

- Two tabletop models—Capitol Hill today and a plan projected to 1980.

- A color slide-illustrated account of Texas Capitol history and the

need for planned growth.

Their reaction, coupled with the decisions of 1959 lawmakers and the policy makers of tomorrow, will determine one salient factor in the political life of all Texans; the Capitol Hill their children will inherit.

One fact is certain, money will be spent to house government. The only question is—how?

Winston Churchill, a gentleman not unknown for his political sagacity, put it this way. "We shape our buildings; then our buildings shape us."

This is the shape given a growing Capitol Hill by today's architects and political planners.

The Building Commission—governor, attorney general and Board of Control chairman—will ask authority to buy a nearly solid bloc of land extending from the present Capitol area to 17th Street with the east boundary set by San Jacinto Boulevard and the west boundary by Lavaca. A half-block strip west of San Jacinto between 15th and 17th Streets and a half-block strip east of Lavaca between 11th and 17th Streets would be left in private hands.

Control of building heights, occupancy and character in the 17th and 19th Street area—plans bordering property on the east and west of Capitol Hill—will also be asked. Gov. Daniel has arranged a meeting of state and city officials to begin plans for zoning the peripheral area.

Land costs in the future Capitol Hill area are estimated at less than

\$500,000 per city block—an upward trend predicted over the next several years.

Land needs are put this way. Buy a half-block tract south of 15th Street between Congress and Colorado for \$250,000 now. Then, before 1967, buy a parcel that lies between Congress and Brazos or between Congress and Colorado from 15th to 16th Streets.

Buildings, those tangible marble, glass and steel homes for judges, engineers and assorted notemakers, will convert this Austin heartland area into a planned community of government. This is the programming for tomorrow.

A \$2.25 million three-agency home for the Fish and Game Commission, State Board of Professional Engineers and Public Welfare Department is planned for the 1959-61 biennium. The money will be supplied by the agencies from their own funds.

Between 1961 and 1967 a second office building with 354,000 square feet of usable space will be needed. Cost, estimated on a \$18 per square foot basis, would be \$6,400,000.

Six more buildings totaling 537,000 square feet will be needed between 1967 and 1980, according to the planners. Total cost—10 million for buildings and \$20 million for land—is estimated at \$30 million.

Where does the money come from?

Right now the Building Commission can write checks on a \$2.5 million bank account. Nudged ahead another \$2 million every two years by the Confederate Pension Fund, this amount will total \$17.5 million by 1980—minus payments for buildings already completed or then underway. State agencies who will make their homes in the new structures or legislative appropriations will pay the balance.

BIDS for the New Archives Building will be taken on March 25 with construction scheduled to begin about mid-April. The controversial Insurance Building is still on the drawing boards. The new Supreme Court Building is 75 per cent

completed; State Office Building, 84 per cent completed; and the Texas Employment Commisison state headquarters, 70 per cent completed.

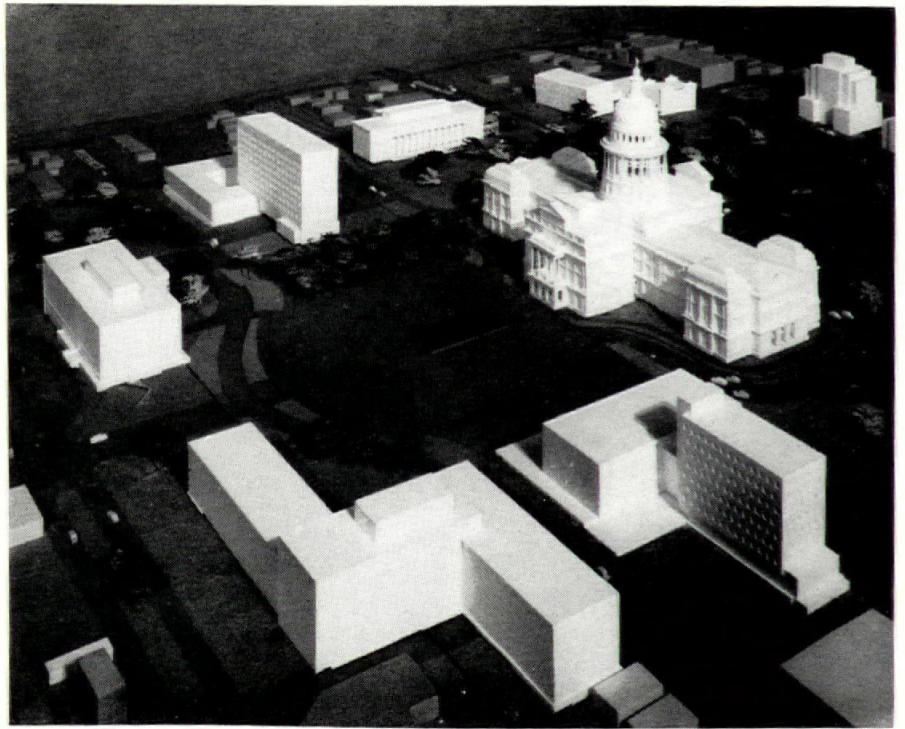
Housing for the government of Texas has put a few burrs under the legislative saddle since those early planners set aside Capitol Square in the waning years of the 19th Century. The four-block area bounded by 11th and Lavaca, 13th and Brazos Streets is the heart of a plan that can go anywhere.

One of those burrs—the fast and simple need for space—has spread 23 per cent of the state government across Austin in offices that cost a quarter of a million dollars per year rent. Master planners would bring them back to Capitol Hill. The Department of Public Safety and State Health Department are not included in the plan.

Space, the need for working elbow room, is the pivot point of a problem that began the day Texas traded a three million acre West Texas cattle empire for its State Capitol Building. Those 19th Century planners got space in return. When the Capitol opened its doors in 1888, the roomy Texas granite structure was the seventh largest building in the world, taller even than the National Capitol. It gave men room to think. Today its spacious rooms and corridors are chopped into offices so tiny that even the cubbyholes have cubbyholes.

Men who write laws and think through policies that will set the Texas pattern for generations of growth need desk space, pacing space, secretary space, file cabinet and typewriter space. They even need space to park a car. They will get it from two sources—the architects who plan and the legislators who hold the clasp on the Texas pocketbook.

The architect is a man who puts all the functions of building together. He is a dreamer with a slide rule; an artist with an engineer's conscience. His tools are ideas shaped into stone, steel, brick, glass, wood, mortar—and space. When you tilt your head to gaze into the Capitol Dome, point your



Close-up view of model shows buildings under construction and those proposed along with the suggested Memorial Court of Honor behind the Capitol.

eyes straight down from the University Tower, or squint across fenceless miles of West Texas grassland, you see the shape of space.

Capitol Hill space takes on a new dimension when you can lift a building off its foundation, close a street, or lift up a section of land and examine a parking garage beneath the surface. You have entered the world of architectural planning.

It's a trimmed to scale world of handcast plaster and wood block buildings, shaved sponge and stove wire trees, tiny white statues and balsa wood cars. It's a handmade world built on sheet cork contours, a table top version of Capitol Hill.

THERE are two versions of this miniature world. The largest, an eight by 10 foot model of Austin from 10th to 19th, Trinity to Guadalupe Streets, shows state government area along with buildings planned or built during this biennium. Capitol Hill is bracketed by Austin business buildings and homes cut to the one-inch-equals-30 feet scale. Each street cork contour jumps the land height by two-and-one-half feet.

Detailed hand-cast and hand-

painted plaster versions of the State Capitol, Governor's Mansion, Supreme Court, Archives, State Office and TEC Buildings dominate the model.

A smaller table top version of Austin shows the square footage requirements to 1980—and the direction they will probably take. This gray and white version of the Capitol City includes the area from Ninth to 24th Streets; State government, University of Texas and the land between. Here, one inch equals 100 feet and the art board contours jump five feet at a time.

Both models give the Budget Board and the men who make the final decisions a chance to take an overhead look at overhead. They're about as close as you can get to a building without building it. Here, architects and lawmakers for years to come will point their pencils to empty plots of land, trace the movement of cars and people down quiet streets, shift cardboard proposals into logical positions.

Eyes are opened wide and the souls of men delighted by beauty—and by imagination. These two concepts meet in a planned Memorial

(Continued on Page 8)

TO ARCHITECTS

A Vote of Thanks . . .

BY PRICE DANIEL

Governor of Texas

Chairman, State Building Commission



Governor Daniel

THE "Master Plan" for Austin's Capitol Hill of 1980 is an outstanding contribution to the people of Texas and a credit to our far-sighted architectural profession.

Appointed early last year by the State Building Commission to advise with us, the State Architectural Advisory Committee has rendered one of the finest public services I have ever witnessed. It has materially aided the Building Commission in drafting plans for an expansion project designed to cope with the needs of future government in Texas.

This outstanding service to the State was rendered without cost, and the Commission will continue to rely upon this Committee and its successors.

The Wise report for Capitol area planning served as the basis for our work, but it had to be brought up to date and many details as to streets, central utilities, parking, and building designs have been handled by the Committee. As a result, we now have maps, charts of future needs, and a splendid hand-cast and hand-painted plaster scale model of the Capitol and grounds, the Governor's Mansion, and present expansion proposals. A smaller model shows future expansion proposals in the area between the Capitol and the University.

Also, the Texas Society of Architects contributed its services to the State in the preparation of film material, including color-slide illustrations on Texas Capitol history and

the need for carefully planned action in the future. Every showing by Mr. John Harold Box and Mr. James Reese Pratt has been hailed with enthusiasm by Legislators, State officials and the Mayor and City Council of Austin.

Much time and effort were devoted to these projects by such men as Robert P. Woltz, Jr., of Fort Worth and Jack Corgan of Dallas, president and president-elect, respectively, of the Texas Society of Architects, and I express sincere appreciation to them.

Members of the Architectural Advisory Committee, to whom we are so deeply indebted are:

L. W. Pitts of Beaumont, Chairman; R. Max Brooks of Austin; Architectural Professors Philip Creer of the University of Texas, Nolan Barrick of Texas Tech, and Theo R. Holleman, Texas A & M; George L. Dahl, Dallas; Charles Granger, Austin; H. E. Jessen, Austin; and Carlton W. Adams, Jr., San Antonio.

To them and to their profession should go great credit for a Capitol area development of which all Texans should be proud.

Such planning for tomorrow comes at a time when Texas is experiencing phenomenal growth—increasing in population at a much faster rate than the national average.

A population of approximately 12,000,000 is forecast by 1975.

With this vast growth has come

a corresponding increase in governmental responsibilities and expanded services to the people. Even greater needs are foreseen for the future, because Texas will continue its pace of growth and development.

THE necessity for expansion of the Capitol grounds has been evident for some time. Already, construction is nearly completed on the Supreme Court building, the State Office building, and the Texas Employment Commission building. Construction will begin soon on the State Library and Archives building which will provide permanent housing for our precious historical documents and records, and the State Insurance building.

Yet, 23 per cent of the government of Texas is still spread over the City of Austin in offices costing \$250,000 a year in rent. The Master Plan adopted by the State Building Commission, with the advice and counsel of the Architectural Advisory Committee will bring these agencies together on Capitol Hill and the area fronting Congress Avenue north of the Capitol. This will be a great saving to the State and a real convenience and beauty for constituents who come to do business with State agencies.

Thanks again to the Texas Society of Architects and especially our Architectural Advisory Committee for this splendid public service to the people of Texas.

... Motion Seconded

BY WILL WILSON
Attorney General of Texas
Member State Building Commission

I AM most enthusiastic about the fine work which the Architectural Advisory Committee has contributed to the State Building Commission.

The planning and execution of any governmental project must necessarily, under our division of powers, be the work of many people. In this instance, the Capitol area ultimately will represent the work of several building commissions and a number of different legislative committees. These factors usually make it extremely difficult to maintain continuity in planning, design and execution, which are all important; but, we hope this need will be fulfilled for the people of Texas by the Architectural Advisory Committee for many years to come.

As the Capitol area grows into what we believe can become the most outstanding center of state government in the nation, it will be an inspiration not only for those in government but also for the thousands of Texas citizens who visit the Capitol annually.

The work of Chairman Pitts and the other members of the Architectural Advisory Committee represents a truly great sacrifice of time and professional effort; it is one of the brightest spots in our government. I personally wish to express my appreciation to the entire architectural profession for this wonderful contribution to the public welfare.



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(Continued from Page 5)

Court of Honor just north of the Capitol. Flanked by the new State Office Building, TEC Building, Supreme Court Building, and a fourth unit still to be designed, the Memorial Court would be a grass flower, and tree-lined frontispiece for all Capitol Hill.

Here, architectural imagination has gone underground to carve a 1,600-car parking garage out of the earth and rock below the Court. Cost of the three-level garage, which would be entered from 14th Street, is estimated at \$3 million. This total, architects believe, would be little more than a price of a surface garage parking the same number of vehicles. Its aesthetic advantages would go beyond the scope of dollars and cents. Meanwhile, cars could be parked on vacant state-owned land.

But, beauty—an often unconscious element of daily living—can't be the only yardstick for a planner. These architects planning for tomorrow

deal in a currency of space and money. How many square feet does a typist need to type? How much room does a lawmaker need to write a bill? Is one furnace cheaper than five furnaces, one air-conditioner more efficient than a scattering of small units? Where will be 56 per cent of state employees who drive their automobiles to work park in 1980?

L. W. Pitts of Houston, R. Max Brooks of Austin and their fellow committee members have struggled with immovable facts and juggled slightly movable figures updating this Master Plan.

It hasn't been completed; perhaps it never will be.

But, they have given the program a line of direction to follow. Their groundwork will be a takeoff for architects planning future buildings, surveying new needs, turning a fresh viewpoint on an old problem.

The need is for space. The time will soon be Tomorrow.

(Reprinted through the courtesy of the Austin American-Statesman).



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The prevention of unlawful and unsound practices in the preparation and letting of such contracts; and

The preservation of free, fair and open competition at all contract lettings on public works.

Two of the most outstanding achievements among the Council's many fine services were the adoption of a standard form contract for municipal construction and the publishing of handbook for municipal officials.

The standard form contract is now being used throughout the state.

The "Municipal Officials Manual" was prepared to serve a definite need—to answer in simplified form a great many of the questions which continually confront public officials. It is particularly helpful to newly-elected officials.

Several years of research work went into the Manual, which contains helpful information divided into four major divisions: legal, finance, engineers and architects, and construction.

THE Council was founded and chartered in 1946 by its five sponsoring organizations: The Texas Society of Architects, the Texas Municipal League (formerly the League of Texas Municipalities), the Texas Society of Professional Engineers, the Municipal Contractors Association (a branch of the Associated General Contractors), and the Municipal Advisory Council of Texas (investment bankers).

Five active members in good

standing from each sponsoring organization serve as members of the Council.

W. W. Payne, representing the Municipal Advisory Council, is now serving as president of the Council with Lorraine M. George of the Municipal Contractors Association as vice president and Howard R. Barr, representing the Texas Society of Architects, as secretary-treasurer.

Other TSA members currently serving as members of the Council are Preston M. Geren of Fort Worth, Henry Mayfield of Bryan, Milton P. McGinty of Houston and Joseph J. Black of Midland.

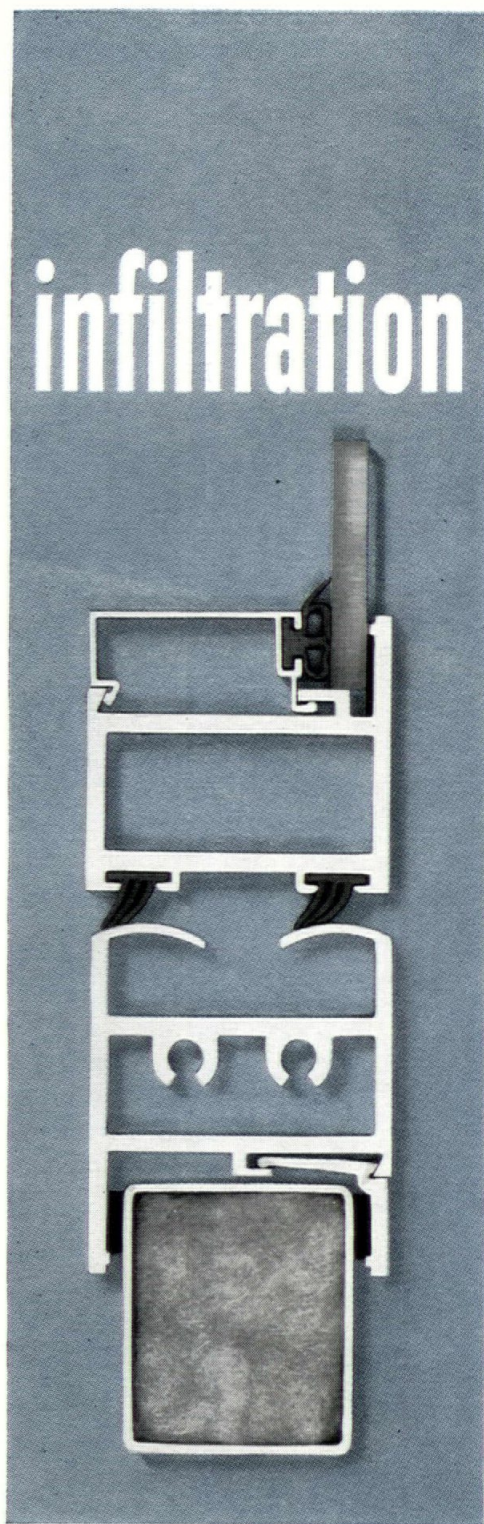
The general aim and scope of the Council's work is summed up well by the preamble to its own Constitution, which declares:

"Realizing the responsibility placed upon public officials, practicing engineers, architects, investment bankers and constructors in expending public funds for improvements which directly affect the health and welfare of the citizenship of a community, we dedicate the Texas Construction Council to a closer cooperation between these organizations which must cooperate and collaborate if the best interest of the public is served."



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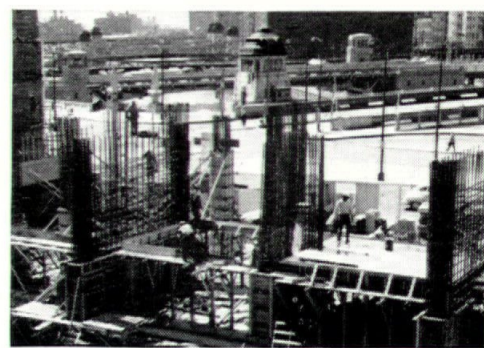
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